BRITISH COLUMBIA
The Best Place on Earth

BC Stats

Data Services
(250) 387-0327
BC.Stats@gov.bc.ca
November 26, 2009
Issue: 09-11

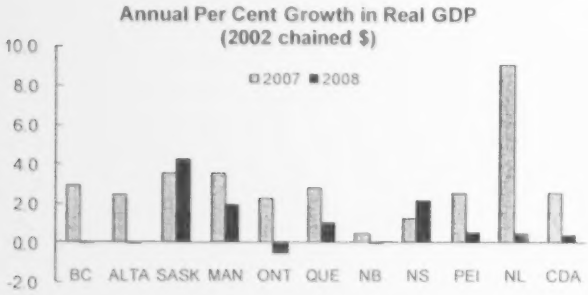
Current Statistics ◆ November 2009

- **Revised figures suggest that BC's economy stalled (+0.0%), but did not shrink, in 2008.** Although this represents a marginal improvement over the estimate published in April (a 0.3% decline in GDP, measured in chained 2002 dollars), the data continue to indicate systemic weakness in the BC economy during 2008.

  Growth in final domestic demand (consumer, business and government spending) slowed to 2.7%, considerably less than the 4.1% increase posted in 2007. Consumer spending (+2.4%) rose, but at a rate that was well below increases seen in the recent past. Business investment (+2.3%), and government spending on goods and services (+3.4%), structures (+8.3%) and machinery & equipment (+2.4%) also provided a boost to the economy.

  The province's sluggish performance in 2008 was largely driven by weak external demand for BC products. Total exports were down 5.1% as sales of goods and services to other provinces (-2.2%) as well as other countries (-6.8%) declined. BC's overall trade deficit continued to deepen, and was the largest it has been since at least 1981.

  Data Source: Statistics Canada



- **Exports of BC products fell 2.8% (*seasonally adjusted*) in September, as international shipments of every major commodity group were down from August levels.** Machinery & equipment (-7.9%) and industrial & consumer products (-4.2%) posted particularly large declines.

  A sharp increase in the value of energy products (+18.4%) shipped south of the border helped boost total exports to the United States by 2.1%, the largest monthly increase registered since October 2008. Overseas exports, on the other hand, slid lower (-7.8%) for a second straight month. Nationally, exports were up 3.5%.

  Data Source: Statistics Canada & BC Stats

- **Lumber production at British Columbia's sawmills continued to fall in August, slipping 14.2% from the same month last year.** Accounting for nearly nine-tenths of all lumber output in the province, Interior mills cut back substantially (-13.8%) on production and were the main contributor to the overall decline.

  Data Source: SC Cat no. 35-003-X

- **The value of building permits issued by BC municipalities fell 27.3% (*seasonally adjusted*) in September, the largest decline in the country.** The decrease was due entirely to less planned activity in the non-residential (-9.0%) sector. Permits plummeted for institutional & government buildings (-90.1%), and industrial (-59.1%) and commercial (-38.1%) projects. However, residential buildings (+39.0%) saw a substantial surge in activity.

  A much different pattern was seen on the National scene. Canadian permits climbed 1.6%, as heightened activity in some of the more populous provinces, such as Ontario (+5.7%), Quebec (+10.7%) and Alberta (+13.8%), was combined with further increases in other parts of the country. Canadian residential permits (+9.4% to $3.2 billion) reached their highest level since September of 2008. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

IMPORTANT NOTE CONCERNING THE FOLLOWING PAGES

THE PAGES WHICH FOLLOW HAVE BEEN FILMED TWICE IN ORDER TO OBTAIN THE BEST REPRODUCTIVE QUALITY

USERS SHOULD CONSULT ALL THE PAGES REPRODUCED ON THE FICHE IN ORDER TO OBTAIN A COMPLETE READING OF THE TEXT.

REMARQUE IMPORTANTE CONCERNANT LES PAGES QUI SUIVENT

LES PAGES SUIVANTES ONT ÉTÉ REPRODUITES EN DOUBLE AFIN D'AMÉLIORER LA QUALITÉ DE REPRODUCTION

LES UTILISATEURS DOIVENT CONSULTER TOUTES LES PAGES REPRODUITES SUR LA FICHE AFIN D'OBTENIR LA LECTURE DU TEXTE INTÉGRAL

Micromedia
ProQuest

789 East Eisenhower Parkway
PO Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346 USA
Toll free: 1-800-521-0600
Fax: (734) 997-4247
Web: www.micromedia.ca

BRITISH COLUMBIA
The Best Place on Earth

BC Stats

Data Services
(250) 387-0327
BC.Stats@gov.bc.ca
November 26, 2009
Issue: 09-11

Current Statistics ◆ November 2009

- **Revised figures suggest that BC's economy stalled (+0.0%), but did not shrink, in 2008.** Although this represents a marginal improvement over the estimate published in April (a 0.3% decline in GDP, measured in chained 2002 dollars), the data continue to indicate systemic weakness in the BC economy during 2008.

  Growth in final domestic demand (consumer, business and government spending) slowed to 2.7%, considerably less than the 4.1% increase posted in 2007. Consumer spending (+2.4%) rose, but at a rate that was well below increases seen in the recent past. Business investment (+2.3%), and government spending on goods and services (+3.4%), structures (+8.3%) and machinery & equipment (+2.4%) also provided a boost to the economy.

  The province's sluggish performance in 2008 was largely driven by weak external demand for BC products. Total exports were down 5.1% as sales of goods and services to other provinces (-2.2%) as well as other countries (-6.8%) declined. BC's overall trade deficit continued to deepen, and was the largest it has been since at least 1981.

  Data Source: Statistics Canada

- **Exports of BC products fell 2.8% (*seasonally adjusted*) in September, as international shipments of every major commodity group were down from August levels.** Machinery & equipment (-7.9%) and industrial & consumer products (-4.2%) posted particularly large declines.

  A sharp increase in the value of energy products (+18.4%) shipped south of the border helped boost total exports to the United States by 2.1%, the largest monthly increase registered since October 2008. Overseas exports, on the other hand, slid lower (-7.8%) for a second straight month. Nationally, exports were up 3.5%.

  Data Source: Statistics Canada & BC Stats

- **Lumber production at British Columbia's sawmills continued to fall in August, slipping 14.2% from the same month last year.** Accounting for nearly nine-tenths of all lumber output in the province, Interior mills cut back substantially (-13.8%) on production and were the main contributor to the overall decline.

  Data Source: SC Cat no. 35-003-X

- **The value of building permits issued by BC municipalities fell 27.3% (*seasonally adjusted*) in September, the largest decline in the country.** The decrease was due entirely to less planned activity in the non-residential (-9.0%) sector. Permits plummeted for institutional & government buildings (-90.1%), and industrial (-59.1%) and commercial (-38.1%) projects. However, residential buildings (+39.0%) saw a substantial surge in activity.

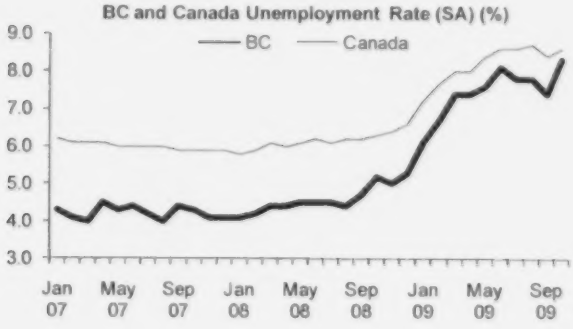
  A much different pattern was seen on the National scene. Canadian permits climbed 1.6%, as heightened activity in some of the more populous provinces, such as Ontario (+5.7%), Quebec (+10.7%) and Alberta (+13.8%), was combined with further increases in other parts of the country. Canadian residential permits (+9.4% to $3.2 billion) reached their highest level since September of 2008. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **Housing starts in British Columbia rose 11.7% (*seasonally adjusted*) in October, following a 16.1% decline in the previous month.** Canadian starts were up 5.4% with Ontario (+14.7%), BC (+11.7%) and Alberta (+10.6%) advancing at rates well above the national average while starts in Quebec (-9.9%) fell sharply. *Data Source: CMHC*

- **British Columbia's unemployment rate jumped to 8.3% (*seasonally adjusted*) in October, reaching its highest level since September 2003.** The incidence of unemployment in BC is now only marginally lower than the Canadian average (8.6%). Jobless rates were up in all but two provinces. Saskatchewan (5.3%) and Manitoba (5.8%) continued to have the lowest unemployment rates in the country.

  October's decline in employment reversed most of the job gains in September. Job losses were concentrated in the goods sector, where employment fell 2.0%. Workers in manufacturing (-7.2%) were particularly hard hit. In the service sector, job losses were modest (-0.2%).

  Data Source: Statistics Canada



- **Manufacturing sales in British Columbia climbed 2.1% (*seasonally adjusted*) in September.** Non-durables manufacturing got a substantial boost (+4.2%) as a result of stronger sales from producers of food (+4.6%), plastics & rubber (+6.2%) and printing (+25.2%) products. Makers of leather (+8.4%) and beverage & tobacco (+2.0%) goods also made gains, although the paper industry faired less favourably (-0.4%). Increased sales figures for the primary metals (+1.6%), machinery (+5.1%) and transportation equipment (+13.4%) industries were unable to offset drops in shipments from wood (-2.4%) and non-metallic mineral (-2.5%) producers, leaving manufacturing sales of durables relatively flat (-0.1%) in September. Nationally, sales were ahead 1.4% over August. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **Wholesale merchants' sales in BC inched down in September (-0.6% *seasonally adjusted*), marking the third consecutive month of decreases.** Canadian sales edged up 0.2%, as declines in most provinces were offset by gains in Ontario (+1.2%) and parts of Atlantic Canada. Every western province saw wholesales slip, with the biggest drop recorded in Saskatchewan (-4.1%).

  Data Source: Statistics Canada

- **Sales by BC retailers rose 1.8% (*seasonally adjusted*) in September, on the heels of a 1.4% increase the month before.** Canadian sales remained stable with a 1.0% increase from August. Saskatchewan (-0.9%) was the only province to record a decline. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **British Columbia's year-over-year inflation rate was down (-0.6%) for the fifth consecutive month in October, due mostly to lower costs for energy and shelter.** The cost of energy remained substantially lower than in October of last year (-11.3%). Had energy been removed from the equation, the provincial rate of inflation would have stood at +0.4%, rather than its actual decline of 0.6%. With notably lower costs for fuel oil (-26.7%) and piped gas (-15.5%), BC residents paid 3.2% less for shelter than in October of last year.

  Gasoline prices remained substantially below those recorded in October of last year. This helped maintain lower transportation (-4.1%) costs, as vehicle owners continued to pay significantly less (-14.7%) to fill up their tanks. Conversely, British Columbians saw food prices rise 1.9%, reflecting increases in the cost of food purchased from stores (+1.8%) as well as restaurant meals (+2.2%). The national rate of inflation was 0.1% last month.

  Data Source: Statistics Canada

MONTHLY STATISTICS

	UNITS	REFERENCE PERIOD	CURRENT			MONTHLY AVERAGE YEAR-TO-DATE	
			LATEST MONTH	% CHANGE FROM LAST MONTH	% CHANGE FROM YEAR AGO	AMOUNT	% CHANGE FROM YEAR AGO
PRICES							
Consumer Price Index-BC	2002=100	Oct '09	112.1	-0.5	-0.6	112.3	-0.1
Consumer Price Index-Vancouver	2002=100	Oct '09	112.7	-0.7	-0.6	112.9	0.0
Consumer Price Index-Victoria	2002=100	Oct '09	111.7	-0.4	-0.5	111.9	0.1
Consumer Price Index-Canada	2002=100	Oct '09	114.6	-0.1	0.1	114.3	0.1
Consumer Price Index-USA	1982-84=100	Oct '09	216.2	0.1	-0.2	214.2	-0.9
Industry Price Index-Canada	1997=100	Sep '09	115.7	-0.5	-6.1	116.7	-3.4
LABOUR							
Unemployment Rate (SA)*-BC	Percent	Oct '09	8.3	(7.4)	(5.2)	7.5	(4.5)
Unemployment Rate (SA)-Canada	Percent	Oct '09	8.6	(8.4)	(6.3)	8.2	(6.1)
Unemployment Rate (SA)-USA	Percent	Oct '09	10.2	(9.8)	(6.6)	9.1	(5.6)
Unemployed (SA)-BC	Thousand	Oct '09	203.5	11.4	61.9	181.9	66.9
Employed (SA)-BC	Thousand	Oct '09	2,257.2	-0.6	-2.2	2,257.1	-2.5
Labour Force (SA)-BC	Thousand	Oct '09	2,460.8	0.3	1.1	2,439.0	0.6
Participation Rate (SA)-BC	Percent	Oct '09	66.0	(65.9)	(66.4)	65.9	(66.7)
Regular EI Benefits Paid	$Million	Sep '09	123.9	-25.3	87.3	139.0	109.6
Regular EI Beneficiaries	Persons	Sep '09	75,320	-19.2	115.9	89,091	101.6
Average Weekly Wage Rate-BC	Dollars	Oct '09	808.81	-0.2	1.7	798.86	2.6
Wages and Salaries-BC (SA)	$Million	Jun '09	7,365.4	-0.8	-2.8	7,436.5	-1.3
Fixed-Weighted Earnings Index-BC	1996=100	Sep '09	123.0	1.2	2.5	122.1	2.3
PRODUCTION - BC							
Lumber-Cubic Metres	Thousand	Sep '09	2,025.0	14.2	-14.3	1,870.2	-23.0
Market Pulp Shipments-Tonnes	Thousand	Sep '09	280	-14.9	-5.1	311	-11.2
Newsprint Shipments-Tonnes	Thousand	Sep '09	26	-18.8	-53.6	37	-30.5
Other Paper Shipments-Tonnes	Thousand	Sep '09	145	3.6	-10.5	131	-17.7
Coal-Tonnes	Thousand	Aug '09	1,794.0	-18.7	-21.4	1,640.0	-29.0
Oil-Cubic Metres	Thousand	Aug '09	111.1	4.1	-4.0	105.9	-5.6
Natural Gas-Cubic Metres	Million	Mar '09	2,956.6	11.5	8.5	2,857.8	9.8
Electric Power Generated	GW.h	Aug '09	4,851.1	-1.4	-12.3	5,049.7	-7.4
Manufacturing Shipments (SA)	$Million	Sep '09	2,720.9	2.1	-18.9	2,696.2	-19.7
GENERAL							
Housing Starts-All Areas BC(SAAR)**	Thousand	Oct '09	18.2	12.3	-38.7	14.7	-59.8
Housing Starts-USA (SAAR)**	Thousand	Oct '09	529.0	-10.6	-30.7	550.0	-42.7
Building Permits-BC (SA)	$Million	Sep '09	666.7	-27.3	-27.0	582.5	-40.1
Residential-BC (SA)	$Million	Sep '09	487.0	39.0	-16.8	306.0	-53.9
Non-Residential-BC (SA)	$Million	Sep '09	179.6	-68.3	-45.2	276.5	-10.5
Retail Sales (NAICS) (SA)-BC	$Million	Sep '09	4,559.0	1.8	-4.2	4,411.7	-7.8
Wholesale Trade (NAICS) (SA)-BC	$Million	Sep '09	4,000.9	-0.6	-11.7	4,035.0	-8.7
Tourism Room Revenues (SA)-BC	$Thousand	Jul '09	141,790	1.6	-11.9	145,062	-13.4
Business Bankruptcies-BC	Number	Sep '09	30	25.0	-42.3	35	-8.2
Consumer Bankruptcies-BC	Number	Sep '09	1,109	33.3	65.5	925	61.7
Incorporations-BC	Number	Oct '09	2,498	-2.0	6.4	2,146	-17.4
Exports Originating in BC (SA)	$Million	Sep '09	1,896.2	-2.8	-32.7	2,070.1	-25.1

November 26, 2009

*SA indicates seasonal adjustment.
**SAAR indicates seasonally adjusted at annual rates.
Brackets () indicate that rates are shown instead of percentage changes.

ANNUAL STATISTICS

	UNITS	YEAR				PERCENT CHANGE		
		2008	2007	2006	2005	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2
PRICES								
Consumer Price Index-BC	2002=100	112.3	110.0	108.1	106.3	2.1	1.8	1.7
Consumer Price Index-Vancouver	2002=100	112.8	110.2	108.0	106.0	2.4	2.0	1.9
Consumer Price Index-Victoria	2002=100	111.8	109.8	108.5	106.9	1.8	1.2	1.5
Consumer Price Index-Canada	2002=100	114.1	111.5	109.1	107.0	2.3	2.2	2.0
Consumer Price Index-USA*	1982-84=100	215.3	207.3	201.6	195.3	3.8	2.9	3.2
Industry Price Index-Canada*	1997=100	120.6	115.6	113.8	111.2	4.3	1.6	2.3
LABOUR								
Unemployment Rate-BC	Percent	4.6	4.2	4.8	5.9	n/a	n/a	n/a
Unemployment Rate-Canada	Percent	6.1	6.0	6.3	6.8	n/a	n/a	n/a
Unemployment Rate-USA*	Percent	5.8	4.6	4.6	5.1	n/a	n/a	n/a
Unemployed-BC	Thousand	111.6	100.0	109.6	132.9	11.6	-8.8	-17.5
Employed-BC	Thousand	2,314.3	2,266.3	2,195.5	2,130.5	2.1	3.2	3.1
Labour Force-BC	Thousand	2,425.9	2,366.4	2,305.1	2,263.4	2.5	2.7	1.8
Participation Rate-BC	Percent	66.6	66.3	65.7	65.6	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total EI Benefits Paid-BC*	$Million	1,732.4	1,562.7	1,564.2	1,650.3	10.9	-0.1	-5.2
Regular EI Benefits Paid-BC*	$Million	807.4	694.3	723.7	837.4	16.3	-4.1	-13.6
Average Weekly Wage Rate-BC	Dollars	780.85	747.84	726.02	704.49	4.4	3.0	3.1
Wages and Salaries-BC*	$Million	90,831.3	86,213.2	81,623.0	74,454.9	5.4	5.6	9.6
Fixed-Weighted Earnings Index-BC*	1996=100	119.9	115.6	111.2	108.2	3.7	4.0	2.8
PRODUCTION - BC								
Lumber-Cubic Metres*	Thousand	28,191.6	36,677.3	41,050.7	41,012.9	-23.1	-10.7	0.1
Market Pulp Shipments-Tonnes*	Thousand	4,021	4,717	4,736	4,932	-14.8	-0.4	-4
Newsprint Shipments-Tonnes*	Thousand	615	846	1,059	1,076	-27.3	-20.1	-1
Other Paper Shipments-Tonnes*	Thousand	1,899	1,917	1,960	1,877	-0.9	-2.2	4.4
Coal-Tonnes*	Thousand	26,163.0	25,941.0	23,161.0	26,718.0	0.9	12.0	-13.3
Oil-Cubic Metres*	Thousand	1,341.8	1,529.2	1,670.6	1,765.7	-12.3	-8.5	-5.4
Natural Gas-Cubic Metres*	Million	32,300.3	31,815.5	35,291.7	31,892.8	1.5	-9.8	10.7
Electric Power Generated*	GW.h	65,855.5	72,217.0	62,021.4	67,811.2	-8.8	16.4	-8.5
Solid Mineral Shipments	$Million	6,652.6	5,607.4	5,990.6	5,384.2	18.6	-6.4	11.3
Farm Cash Receipts**	$Million	2,504.5	2,391.6	2,335.6	2,378.4	4.7	2.4	-1.8
Manufacturing Shipments*	$Million	39,759.5	42,526.4	44,479.9	42,882.6	-6.5	-4.4	3.7
GENERAL								
Housing Starts-All Areas BC**	Thousand	34.3	39.2	36.4	34.7	-12.4	7.6	5.1
Housing Starts-USA	Thousand	905.5	1,355.0	1,800.9	2,068.3	-33.2	-24.8	-12.9
Building Permits-BC*	$Million	10,577.2	12,544.7	11,541.5	10,182.9	-15.7	8.7	13.3
Residential-BC*	$Million	6,899.3	8,611.7	7,620.7	6,970.8	-19.9	13.0	9.3
Non-Residential-BC*	$Million	3,677.9	3,933.0	3,920.8	3,212.1	-6.5	0.3	22.1
Retail Sales (NAICS)-BC*	$Million	56,562.4	56,365.4	52,837.1	49,286.3	0.3	6.7	7.2
Wholesale Trade (NAICS)-BC*	$Million	52,856.6	53,390.7	49,293.5	45,447.4	-1.0	8.3	8.5
Tourism Room Revenues-BC*	$Thousand	1,977.4	1,964.0	1,807.6	1,681.6	0.7	8.6	7.5
Business Bankruptcies-BC*	Number	454	470	587	786	-3.4	-19.9	-25.3
Consumer Bankruptcies-BC*	Number	7,293	6,651	7,022	8,179	9.7	-5.3	-14.1
Incorporations-BC*	Number	30,085	34,036	33,273	30,937	-11.6	2.3	7.6
Exports Originating in BC*	$Million	33,181.4	31,560.5	33,470.9	34,167.3	5.1	-5.7	-2.0
Capital Expenditures-BC	2009							
($Million)	43,317.6	46,689.2	42,669.6	39,912.2	33,254.2	9.4	6.9	20
(per cent change 2008-2009)	-7.2							
Population of BC (as at July 1)	4,455,207	4,383,845	4,309,453	4,243,580	4,196,788	1.7	1.6	1.1
(per cent change 2008-2009)	1.6							

* derived from monthly figures
**derived from quarterly figures

dash (-) indicates not available

n/a = not applicable

November 26, 2009

ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE

GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT (GDP)

	YEAR				PERCENT CHANGE		
	2008	2007	2006	2005	2007-08	2006-07	2005-06
BRITISH COLUMBIA (Millions $Cdn) *Nov. 2009*							
Gross Domestic Product at Market Prices	197,931	191,598	182,310	169,664	3.3	5.1	7.5
Real Gross Domestic Product (chained 2002 $)	164,520	164,519	159,916	153,489	0.0	2.9	4.2
CANADA (Millions $Cdn) *Nov. 2009*							
Gross Domestic Product at Market Prices	1,600,081	1,532,944	1,449,215	1,373,845	4.4	5.8	5.5
Real GDP at Market Prices (chained 2002 $)	1,321,360	1,315,907	1,283,419	1,247,807	0.4	2.5	2.9
UNITED STATES (Billions $US) **							
Gross Domestic Product at Market Prices	14,441.4	14,077.6	13,398.9	12,638.4	2.6	5.1	6.0
Real GDP at Market Prices (chained 2005 $US)	13,312.2	13,254.1	12,976.2	12,638.4	0.4	2.1	2.7

*** US Department of Commerce, July 31, 2009*

INTEREST AND EXCHANGE RATES

(Source: Bank of Canada)

	Nov. 25/09	Nov. 18/09	Oct. 28/09	Nov. 26/08
	PERCENT PER ANNUM			
CANADA				
Prime Business Rate	2.25	2.25	2.25	4.00
Bank Rate	0.50	0.50	0.50	2.50
Marketable Government Bond Rate (over 10 years)	3.84	3.95	3.98	4.00
Conventional Mortgages - 1 Year	3.60	3.80	3.80	6.35
- 5 Years	5.59	5.84	5.84	7.20
UNITED STATES				
Prime Rate	3.25	3.25	3.25	4.00
EXCHANGE RATES	AVERAGE NOON SPOT RATE ($CDN)			
US Dollar	1.0501	1.0500	1.0756	1.2342
Japanese Yen	0.0120	0.0118	0.0118	0.0129
UK Pound Sterling	1.7505	1.7592	1.7612	1.8785
European Euro	1.5841	1.5738	1.5878	1.5827

FORECASTS

	Real GDP		Unemployment Rate		Consumer Price Index	
	2009	2010	2009	2010	2009	2010
	% Change	*% Change*	*%*	*%*	*% Change*	*% Change*
BRITISH COLUMBIA						
BC Government (September 2009, Budget Update)	-2.9	1.9	7.9	8.3	0.6	2.1
Central 1 Credit Union (Fall 2009)	-3.4	2.4	7.8	7.5	0.4	1.7
Scotiabank Group (November 5, 2009)	-2.3	3.0	7.6	7.4	-	-
TD Bank (November 3, 2009)	-2.4	2.5	7.5	8.2	0.1	1.5
CIBC WM Economics (November 20, 2009)	-2.2	2.5	-	-	-	-
Global Insight (November 2009)	-2.0	2.7	7.5	7.1	0.2	1.8
CANADA						
Scotiabank Group (November 5, 2009)	-2.4	2.7	8.4	8.6	0.3	1.8
TD Bank (November 3, 2009)	-2.3	2.5	8.4	9.1	0.2	1.1
CIBC WM Economics (October 27, 2009)	-2.4	2.0	8.3	8.7	0.2	1.4
Global Insight (November 2009)	-2.6	2.2	8.3	8.8	0.5	1.8
UNITED STATES						
Scotiabank Group (November 5, 2009)	-2.5	3.1	9.3	9.8	-0.4	2.0
TD Bank (September 23, 2009)	-2.5	2.4	9.2	9.8	-0.6	1.2
CIBC WM Economics (October 27, 2009)	-2.4	1.6	9.3	10.0	-0.5	1.6
Global Insight (November 2009)	-2.5	2.2	9.2	10.0	-0.3	1.5

dash (-) indicates not available

November 26, 2009